

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:

an illumination input area;

an illumination light guide in optical communication with said illumination input area;

a read window disposed approximately perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said illumination light guide;

a detection guide having one end proximate said read window and having a second end forming a detection output, said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide defining a light pathway; and

an overillumination redirection component located adjacent to and in optical communication with said illumination input area and said illumination light guide, said overillumination redirection component comprising four overillumination redirection facets disposed about an outside perimeter of said illumination light guide, said overillumination redirection facets configured to direct overilluminating light away from said light pathway.

2. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 further comprising an illumination redirection facet in along said light pathway between said illumination ~~light guide~~ input area and said read window, said illumination redirection facet configured to redirect illuminating light along said light pathway.

3. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 further comprising a detection redirection facet in along said light pathway between said read window and said detection ~~guide~~ output, said detection redirection facet configured to redirect detection light along said light pathway.

4. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1, further comprising a needle extending outwardly from said ~~read window~~ format and adapted to deposit a sample onto said read window.

5. (Original) The format of claim 1 further comprising a dried reagent on said read window.

6. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide has a first cross-sectional area and said detection guide has a second cross-sectional area, said second cross-sectional area being larger than said first cross-sectional area.

7. (Original) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of a unitary piece of optically clear material.

8. (Original) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of separate pieces of optically clear material joined into a single optical format.

9. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 1, wherein said overillumination redirection facets are configured to direct overilluminating light approximately perpendicular to said longitudinal axis of said illumination light guide.

10. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 9 wherein at least two of said overillumination redirection facets are disposed at an approximately 45-degree angle from said illumination light guide.

11-23. (Cancelled).

24. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 further comprising an illumination redirection facet ~~in along~~ said light pathway between said illumination ~~light guide~~ input area and said read window, and a detection redirection facet ~~in along~~ said light pathway between said read window and said detection ~~guide~~ output.

25. (Currently Amended) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:

an illumination input area;

an illumination light guide in optical communication with said illumination input area, said illumination light guide comprising four sides defining an outside perimeter of said illumination light guide ~~and a first illumination end and a second illumination end;~~

a read window, ~~said second illumination end proximate said read window proximate to one end of said illumination light guide;~~

a detection guide having one end proximate said read window and having a second end forming a detection output; and

four overillumination redirection facets located proximate to and in optical communication with said illumination input area and said illumination light guide, said four overillumination redirection facets substantially surrounding said outside perimeter of said illumination light guide such that each overillumination redirection facet is adjacent to and in optical communication with a corresponding side of said illumination light guide.

26. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 25 wherein at least two of said overillumination redirection facets are disposed at approximately 45 degree angles from a longitudinal axis of said illumination light guide.

27. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 25 further comprising a needle extending outwardly from said ~~read window~~ format and adapted to deposit a sample onto said read window.

28. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 25 further comprising a dried reagent on said read window.

29. (Currently Amended) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:

an illumination input area;

an illumination light guide in optical communication with said illumination input area;

a read window disposed along a light pathway, ~~wherein said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide define said light pathway;~~

a detection guide having one end proximate said read window and having a second end forming a detection output, wherein said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide define said light pathway; and

four overillumination facets located adjacent to and in optical communication with said illumination input area and said illumination light guide, said overillumination facets disposed ~~[[at]]~~ at acute angles relative to said light pathway and configured to direct overilluminating light away from said light pathway.

30. (Cancelled).

31. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 29, wherein said read window is disposed approximately perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said illumination light guide pathway.

32. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 29 wherein said detection guide is disposed approximately parallel to said illumination light guide.

33. (Cancelled).

34. (Currently Amended) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:

an illumination light guide ~~having a first illumination end forming adjacent to an~~ illumination input area, said illumination light guide having an outside perimeter;

a detection guide having a first detection end proximate a read window and a second detection end forming a detection area;

an overillumination redirection component proximate said illumination input area and substantially surrounding said outside perimeter of said illumination light guide, said overillumination redirection component comprising one or more overillumination redirection facets each disposed at an acute angle relative to a light pathway defined by said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide such that said overillumination redirection component is configured to direct overilluminating light away from said light pathway.

35. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 34, wherein said illumination light guide has a polygonal cross-section comprising a plurality of sides that define said outside perimeter.

36. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 35, wherein each side borders a corresponding overillumination redirection facet.

37. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 34 wherein said read window is disposed approximately perpendicular to said light pathway.

38. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 34 wherein said overillumination redirection component is configured to direct overilluminating light approximately perpendicular to light pathway.

39. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 34 wherein said format further comprises an illumination redirection facet ~~in~~ along said light pathway between said illumination light guide input area and said read window, and a detection redirection facet ~~in~~ along said light pathway between said read window and said detection guide area.

40. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 34 further comprising a needle extending outwardly from said ~~read window~~ format and adapted to deposit a sample onto said read window.

41. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 34 wherein said illumination light guide has a first cross-sectional area and said detection guide has a second cross-sectional area, said second cross-sectional area being larger than said first cross-sectional area.

42. (Currently Amended) The format of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of a unitary piece of optically clear material.

43. (Currently Amended) The format of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 34, wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of separate pieces of optically clear material joined into a single optical format.